

## Message Text

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64

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PA-01 USIA-06

PRS-01 SP-02 /059 W

----- 088710

R 021014Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8127

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN 237

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMCONSUL MADRAS

USINT BAGHDAD

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, IN

SUBJECT: EMMIGRATION OF INDIAN LABOR

REF: NEW DELHI 11582

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1. THE AIR INDIA MANAGER FOR EAST ASIA SERVICES RECENTLY

TOLD US THAT SAUDI ARABIA INSTRUCTED HIS COMPANY NOT TO CARRY PERSONS SEEKING EMPLOYMENT IN SAUDI ARABIA OTHER THAN MUSLIMS AND CHRISTIANS. ( AN MEA JOINT SECRETARY TOLD US IT WAS SIKHS AND BUDDHISTS WHO WERE EXCLUDED). KOREAN WORKERS WERE ALSO SAID TO BE INCLUDED IN THE BAN. THE AIRLINE OFFICIAL SAID THAT THE INDIAN MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS INSTRUCTED THE INDIAN AMBASSADOR AT JIDDA TO PROTEST WHAT IN EFFECT IS THE EXCLUSION OF SIKH AND HINDU WORKERS. HE SAID THAT 60 PERCENT OF INDIAN WORKERS IN THE PERSIAN GULF STATES ARE HINDU AND SIKH AND 40 PERCENT ARE MUSLIM. THE MANAGER EXPLAINED THAT THE EXCLUSION STEMMED FROM DISTURBANCES WHICH HAD OCCURRED IN VARIOUS PARTS OF SAUDI ARABIA BETWEEN PATHANS AND SIKHS, WHICH HE SAID FOLLOWED SHORTLY AFTER THE VISIT OF A PAKISTANI DELEGATION TO SAUDI ARABIA. HE WAS CERTAIN THAT THERE HAD BEEN "PROVOCATION". THE SAUDIS REPORTEDLY DECIDED TO EXCLUDE KOREAN WORKERS OUT OF CONCERN THAT THERE MIGHT BE SOME NORTH KOREAN COMMUNIST INFLUENCE AMONG THEM.

2. THE SAUDI CHARGE IN NEW DELHI, SALAIMAN AL-NASSER, TOLD AN EMBOFF THAT THERE WAS NO RELIGIOUS RESTRICTION ON INDIA LABOR ENTERING SAUDI ARABIA. PROBLEMS HAD OCCURRED WITH INDIAN LABORERS BECAUSE OF ILL-MATCHED SKILLS, E.G., CARPENTERS RECRUITED FOR LABORERS JOBS, BUT NOW INDIAN LABOR CONTRACTORS WERE BEING HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR SUCH PROBLEMS, AND THE SITUATION HAD IMPROVED. ALTHOUGH ONE GROUP OF SIKHS HAD BEEN DEPORTED WHEN THEY THREATENED TO STRIKE, AL-NASSER SPOKE VERY FAVORABLY OF SIKHS IN GENERAL. HE SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN QUESTIONED BY THE GOI ABOUT THE LABOR SITUATION IN HIS COUNTRY AND GAVE THEM THE SAME ANSWER AS HE WAS PROVIDING US.

3. IN DISCUSSION WITH LABOR COUNSELOR, SENIOR LABOR MINISTRY OFFICIALS EMPHASIZED THAT RECENT MOVES TO REGULATE EMMIGRATION OF INDIAN LABOR(REFTEL) STEMMED FORM ABUSES COMMITTED BY UNSCRUPULOUS LABOR CONTRACTORS. THEY DENIED AWARENESS OF ANY OTHER PROBLEMS THAT INDIANS WERE ENCOUNTERING ABROAD. THE GOI DID NOT, THEY SAID, SEEK TO LIMIT THE EMMIGRATION OF INDIAN LABOR EITHER IN TERMS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF SKILLS OR NUMBERS. THE OFFICIALS WERE CONFIDENT THAT ANY RESULTING SHORTAGE OF CRITICAL SKILLS WITHIN INDIA COULD BE REMEDIED BY INCREASING THE OUTPUT OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTES. WHILE THE LABOR MINISTRY OFFICIALS CLEARLY SEE EMMIGRATION AS BENEFICIAL IN TERMS OF RELIEVING THE HUGE UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM, INDIAN ENTREPRENEURS HAVE COMPLAINED ABOUT THEIR INABILITY TO RECRUIT SKILLED WORKERS.

4. COMMENT: IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR US TO RECONCILE THE STATE-  
MENTS OF AIR INDIA MANAGER, FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL, AND  
SAUDI CHARGE CONCERNING THE EXCLUSION OF HINDUS (OR BUDDHISTS)  
AND SIKHS. ANY LIGHT EMBASSY  
JIDDA CAN SHED ON THIS MATTER WOULD BE APPRECIATED AS WOULD  
CONTINUED REPORTING BY JIDDA AND OTHER PERSIAN  
GULF MISSIONS ON ATTITUDES TOWARD INDIAN WORKERS.  
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## Message Attributes

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